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THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM

ISSUED BY DIRECTION AND UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

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WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, President.

Each member is invited to send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Members should be careful to write distinctly and on one side of the paper only.

In sending questions, or answers to questions, whenever an assertion is made that such and such is a doctrine, or that "it is said in Theosophical literature," and the like, the name of author, article, volume, and page referred to must be given.

All communications should be addressed to **The Editor, Theosophical Forum, 144 Madison Avenue, New York City.**

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

QUESTION 21.

While thoroughly sympathizing with the action of the recent Convention in electing Mr. William Q. Judge President for life of the Theosophical Society in America, I nevertheless do not think that he should have been given the position of an autocrat. It is quite right that he should be elected President for life, because there is no one else who can do the work as well as he and because also it was an excellent rebut to the untheosophical attitude of those who attacked him; but I do think that it was unwise of the Convention to give him the power of electing his successor. America is a free country and the members there should have been allowed to do what they chose in the matter of successorship.

Claude Falls Wright.—The questioner has not fully examined the resolutions which mention this particular point, nor the Constitution of the Theosophical Society in America. Mr. Judge was not given the power to "elect" his successor; he was merely empowered to *nominate* the person fitted to follow in his place. Many questions similar to this one have been asked, and it is

simply because the questioners have not fully examined the Constitution that they ask them. It is perfectly right that Mr. Judge should have been given the power to nominate his successor, because clearly none could know better than he the possibilities and the abilities of the workers, and he would be aware as to who should best fulfil the position. The Society is not however obliged to act on the nomination. It is perfectly autonomous and free. Anybody can nominate another to fulfil a position, but the Convention or Society is not required to accept the nomination. Such power to nominate or indicate the successor has obtained in all the occult hierarchies, and it is right that the T.S.A. should have given that power to one so well fitted to make proper use of it. It is to be regretted that members do not look more carefully into these matters before asking such questions as the above.

QUESTION 22.

Do you know if the Theosophical Movement can be considered as a success from the Masters' point of view? Have we done as well as they expected, and can we take it for granted that the Movement is now on a stable enough footing to last until 1975, when a new and greater impetus will be given it?

Bandusia Wakefield.—The history of the Theosophical Movement in this century from the beginning up to the present has been one of growth,—not the growth of a mushroom but that of an oak. No storm has been able to crush this Movement, and it has acquired the strength of every tempest it has withstood. This is the kind of growth the Masters desired, the only kind fitted for endurance. The threatening dangers of sectarianism and crystalization, which preclude all progress, have so far been met but to be overcome, and instead of the boundaries of the Movement being narrowed they have been widened, so that there exists to-day a strong Theosophical Society whose principal aim and object is to form a nucleus of *Universal Brotherhood without any distinctions whatever*, with, in addition, kindred organizations having similar aims and objects; while the influence of the Movement has spread beyond the boundaries of theosophical organizations. The Theosophical Movement has already broken down some of the barriers of race and nation, creed and caste, and it steadily continues the work. Materialism is giving way before it. The spread of its helpful teachings still goes on and the sentiment of altruism grows daily stronger together with

more enlightened endeavor towards the realization of Universal Brotherhood. The ranks of those who stand for the Movement are increasing. All this is what the Masters desired, and it is not to be supposed that they expected the work would be completed at this time. That it is in a state of healthy progress with a large body of earnest and devoted people using their best efforts to carry it on indicates that so far it is "a success from the Masters' point of view," since they do not ask more than the best efforts of those who work for the cause.

Considering the foresight which the Masters possess, knowing as they did the difficulties and dangers which would beset the Movement, and the weaknesses of human nature which would cause friends to leave it and become enemies, it is not likely that they would build their expectations too high.

The Movement now stands on the broadest basis possible, that of Universal Brotherhood without any distinctions, and so has room to grow without limit,—a necessity for all living movements and organizations which are to endure. It is still set in the direction of growth and not of petrifaction, and it depends only on the continued devotion and earnest endeavor of those who have the cause at heart to keep the impulse going which shall carry the Movement on till 1975, "when a new and greater impetus will be given it."

QUESTION 23.

Believing in reincarnation as many Theosophists do, and considering the fact that our ten preceding births may have been in ten different nations or races, how can the sentiment of patriotism be defended?

W. Q. Judge.—Patriotism is love for the land in which your body was born, and it would seem on reflection that whether ten preceding births were in other nations and races or not has nothing to do with the patriotism felt in this. In each birth the same feeling would be felt for each country. All this has no connection with a defence of patriotism. Inasmuch as the sentiment has been always recognized as noble and good its defence seems unnecessary. Why should Theosophists, I may ask, raise a question of doubt as to such a high sentiment as this? It needs no defence at all. At first the man may love only himself; then he enlarges his love and extends it to his family; then a little more and he takes in his town or county; until at last he still further enlarges his love so as to embrace his country. Patriotism then

is a love that is larger than the personal and hence a nearer approach to that feeling which would make all men brothers. A person cannot die for his country unless his love has gone beyond the confines of his family. Patriotism is in fact the best example humanity can furnish of an attempt at the universality of love that belongs to the Self within.

QUESTION 24.

I have just read of a case in which a young lady lay in a trance induced through religious excitement, for twelve hours. During this interval she claims to have had wonderful experiences, seeing angels, being in heaven, etc. She asserts also that her spirit was all the time absent from the body. Now, taking her statement to be true, by what means, since the spirit was absent from the body, were the sights and sounds impressed upon the brain? How is it possible for the mind to receive an impression of things experienced by the soul when the latter is out of the body?

Dr. Allen Griffiths.—Both Heaven and Hell are states of consciousness, not localities. Hence the person referred to need not necessarily have been "out of the body." An assertion to the contrary does not establish the fact. Her experience was neither spiritual nor of the higher mental state, but purely astral. Swedenborg and many others had similar experiences, and results accruing therefrom are both untrustworthy and unsatisfactory. In the case under consideration the Consciousness functioned for the time being upon the astral plane and was affected by two sets of influences: *(a)* Preconception and belief as to what heaven is; *(b)* the first coming in contact with and being colored by the conceptions and beliefs of others, which are reflected in the astral light. In fact, the whole process was the action of the lower, personal brain consciousness and belongs to the plane of the lower quaternary. That being the case, upon return to the normal state the physical brain, *upon which the impressions were really made*, retained and reflected the record of the astral experiences. The Soul, the Ego, the Thinker, *per se*, did not take part in the experience simply because the whole matter was an illusion with which the Thinker is not concerned.

But I believe there are rare instances when the Thinker does leave the physical plane and accomplish and experience certain things in the Thought Body. That is only possible when altruism and impersonality rule the lower man and make him subservient to the higher, and when a sincere and persistent attempt is made

to realize one's highest ideals and to be true to them. That condition by its very intensity refines the physical brain, and the knowledge obtained during the Thinker's absence in the Thought Body, which is impressed upon the brain of the latter, is upon return registered upon the physical brain and influences and elevates the everyday consciousness. It is possible to so think, live and act that the Thinker while at home on its own plane still can impress and direct the lower brain consciousness. And that is just what one has to do. Altruism, impersonality and striving to be true to our highest ideals, make that end possible. Selfishness and yielding to the lower nature bring sure defeat.

QUESTION 25.

The Science of Astronomy teaches that the light that surrounds a planet is due to a luminous ether thrown off from that planet. There is a similar light that surrounds man. These lights are known to the Theosophists as astral lights; science also teaches us that the light and heat in coal and in the vegetable and animal kingdoms are due to the sun's force. Do the phenomena produced in all of the above mentioned cases emanate from the sun's force? Could there be any air without the sun's force?

Dr. C. J. López.—I do not agree with the premises of the inquirer. I have never learned scientifically that the light that surrounds a planet is luminous ether nor that luminous ether is thrown off by the planet. The scientific conception of luminous ether is that it is a universally diffused medium whose vibrations produce in our optic organs the phenomenon of sight. Its existence and universal distribution are indispensable for the support of the undulatory theory of light. Thus, in order to explain the fact that the light-vibration started from Sirius, so distant from us, reaches our eyes in due course of time, it is necessary to admit that the immense space intervening is not void but filled with a subtile, ethereal differentiation of substance, called luminous ether, whose waves or undulations transmit the original vibration to us.

But the astral light referred to is something different and immensely finer, since its vibrations are beyond the range of ordinary, physical sight. Were these identical with luminous ether, every one would see them with the physical eye, and such is not the case. The "odic emanations" of Reichenbach and the "magnetic zones" of Dr. Lhuys come nearer to the conception of astral light than the luminous ether of materialistic science.

To the first question I would answer: No. All the phenomena mentioned do not emanate from the sun's force.

To the second I would frankly reply that I do not know. I simply would suggest that in our speculations about celestial bodies we should not consider the solid nucleus as independent and the gaseous or even ethereal envelope as extraneous, but all as part and parcel of the same whole, interpenetrating and interblending with each other. When thinking of a sun, a star or a planet as a separate piece of the universal machinery, one ought to conceive the circumference of the spheroid not as the outline of the solid, gross constitutents thereof, but as the extreme limit of its atmosphere or photosphere as the case may be.

QUESTION 26.

If a woman's relatives entirely disapprove of Theosophy and of her studying it, is it right for her to persist in doing as she pleases, or would it not be the higher part for her to give way to their wishes, and in this sense sacrifice herself?

Genevieve Ludlow Griscom.— It is impossible to lay down absolute rules of conduct. Each individual must work these out for himself, acting up to the highest ideal he can form. But certain fundamental principles apply to every case which can never be safely disregarded. One of these is to think always of other people first, counting their pleasure, their convenience of the first importance. It would seem that this would dispose of the present question. If a woman study Theosophy in spite of the opposition of her family, she is simply selfish, considering *herself* instead of *them*, and it could hardly be a Buddha of Compassion, who renounces Nirvana for the sake of humanity, that would result from such a beginning. The two states may seem far apart, and so in truth they are, but the analogy exists, and the character which will determine our final choice is built up day by day in the small details of life. The source of confusion on this subject generally arises from the fact that the sacrifice demanded is of higher and spiritual things, and the temptation is the more subtile on that account, demanding a nicer appreciation and finer discrimination, as well as greater strength and elevation of soul. In one sense it is a heavy Karma which lies on those confronted with this problem, but in our patient acceptance of it lies our hope of release, for we in past lives placed this burden upon our own backs and only we can loosen it. It should never be forgotten also, that Theosophy is primarily a matter of the *heart*

and the *life;* study and talk are not necessary, and the fierce opposition aroused by persistent proclamation of principles distasteful to those we live with but injures the cause we seek to serve, and engenders strife and ill-feeling where there should be only harmony and love. Not so, either by precept or example, taught the Buddha or the Christ.

QUESTION 27.

What does the following from Isis Unveiled *Vol. 1 p. 346 mean? "Some unfortunates fall out entirely, and lose all chance of the prize; some retrace their steps and begin again. This is what the Hindû dreads above all things—transmigration and reincarnation: only on other and inferior planets, never on this one."*

L. F. Wade.—Nothing. In Vol. 1, p. 232, of the *Path*, Nov. 1886, H.P.B. considers the discrepancies between the statements made in *Isis Unveiled* and her later teachings as to transmigration and reïncarnation. At page 237 of the same volume she says: "'This is what the Hindû dreads above all things—*transmigration* and *reïncarnation;* only on other and inferior planets, never on this one !!!' The last 'sentence' is a fatal mistake and one to which the writer pleads '*not guilty.*' It is evidently the blunder of some 'reader' who had no idea of Hindû philosophy and who was led into a subsequent mistake on the next page, wherein the unfortunate word 'planet' is put for *cycle. Isis* was hardly, if ever, looked into after its publication by its writer, who had other work to do; otherwise there would have been an apology and a page pointing to the *errata* and the sentence made to run: 'The Hindû dreads transmigration in other *inferior* forms, on this planet.'"

As to this, and other errors in *Isis*, H.P.B. also wrote in *Lucifer*, Vol. VIII, p. 241, article "My Books," (*her last article*), which was published as a leaflet.

QUESTION 28.

Will you please kindly explain the following statement from Isis Unveiled, *Vol. 1, p. 347. "But this former life believed in by the Buddhists, is not a life on this planet, for more than any other people the Buddhistical philosopher appreciated the great doctrine of cycles."*

A. E. S. Smythe.—A similar question was dealt with by W.Q.J. in FORUM 52, old series, where some useful suggestions

are made. It is necessary to consider what H.P.B. meant by "Buddhists," in order to gather what may be meant by "life" to the "Buddhistical philosopher." *Isis*, Vol. II, p. 156, says, "The earliest system of the Buddhistic philosophy—which preceded by far Gautama Buddha—is based upon the uncreated substance of the "Unknown," the Adi Buddha . . . Neither Adi, nor either *(sic)* of the five Dhyani Buddhas were ever incarnated, but seven of their emanations became Avatars, *i.e.*, were incarnated on this earth." On p. 159 *(ibid)* we read "Christos, as a unity, is but an abstraction; a general idea representing the collective aggregation of the numberless spirit-entities, which are the direct emanations of the infinite, invisible, incomprehensible First Cause—the individual spirits of men erroneously called the souls. They are the divine sons of God, of which some only overshadow mortal men—but this the majority—some remain forever planetary spirits, and some—the smaller and rare minority—unite themselves during life with some men. Such God-like beings as Gautama Buddha, Jesus, Tissoo, Christna, and a few others, had united themselves with their spirits permanently —hence they became gods on earth." On pp. 152-3 *(ibid)*, in discussing the doctrine of permutation or *revolutio* it is remarked "that Moses, like certain other God-like men, was believed to have reached the highest state of all states on earth:—the rarest of all psychological phenomena, the perfect union of the immortal spirit with the terrestrial *duad* had occurred . . . But how rare such incarnations." On page 142, *(ibid)* it is stated, "When we use the term *Buddhists*, we do not mean to imply by it either the exoteric Buddhism instituted by the followers of Gautama Buddha, nor the modern Buddhistic religion, but the secret philosophy of Sakya-muni, which in its essence is certainly identical with the ancient wisdom-religion of the sanctuary, the pre-Vedic Brahmanism. . . . (p. 143). By *Buddhism*, therefore, we mean that religion signifying literally the doctrine of wisdom, and which by many ages antedates the metaphysical philosophy of Siddartha Sakyamuni." In *Isis*, I, pp. 345-6, an outline is given of the development of a perfect man on this plane. "No human being completes its grand cycle, or the 'circle of necessity,' until all these (perfections) are accomplished. . . . Some unfortunates fall out entirely, and lose all chance of the prize; some retrace their steps and begin again. This is what the Hindû dreads above all things—*transmigration* and *reincarnation*; only on other and inferior planets, never on this one." Some readers apply the phrase "never on this one," to the process of

reïncarnation, while it really refers to the fear entertained by the Hindû that he may reïncarnate in other and inferior forms. (See *Path*, vol. i, p. 232.) At the foot of the same page it is said: "The *pitris* (the pre-Adamic spirits) are considered as *reïncarnated* by the Buddhistic philosopher, though in a degree far superior to that of the man of earth." Contemplating the Cosmos as a whole and the human race as a unit, the manifestation of the particular Manu of our cycle, the term "life" seems to be applied to the life-cycle or period covering all the births and deaths which may be experienced, and which are necessary for the attainment of perfection in the special stage of evolution under consideration. The pitri cannot be said to be fully incarnated, or to have attained "life," until possessed of an enlightened or perfected body; it is but rarely that such a one undergoes a subsequent reïncarnation in this cycle, as he dwells on other planes until the new manvantara shall have prepared a new planet. As H.P.B. distinctly says, it is the "secret philosophy" and not the exoteric Buddhist thought to which she refers. If the present manifestation of life be considered as a unit, the incarnation of one Manu, in the high spiritual sense in which the "secret philosophy" may be supposed to view it, a "former life" would refer to the previous Manvantara or incarnation of the Manu. The divulgence of details in the *Secret Doctrine* appears to support this view. The attitude of *Isis* is one of opposition to the Kardec theory of reïncarnation of the personality.

QUESTION 29.

As I understand Theosophical teachings, we are to live on this earth and reïncarnate in different bodies until we have had all the experience we can get. Do we live in male and female bodies as well; or is a man always a man, and a woman always a woman?

Dr. J. D. Buck.—It has been said in T.S. literature many times that the "*Self* is sexless: that sex is an incident of gestation." In the Kabala it is asked, "When shall the Kingdom of Heaven come?" and the answer is, "When man shall be as woman and woman as man, and man and woman together neither man nor woman—then shall the Kingdom of Heaven come." Hence Jesus said to those who tried to entrap him with the case of the woman who had seven husbands, "In heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels who are in heaven." In my judgment it is folly, and a waste of time to speculate on special cases, as, for example, whether one now a

man will be a woman in the next incarnation. It is folly because it is what no man or woman can certainly know, and a waste of time because there are things of more importance.

Sex is the predominance of intellect on the one hand, and of feeling or emotion on the other. There are, moreover, "typical males" and "typical females," and, again, a large number where the balance that determines sex is but feebly drawn. Hence—"feminine men" and "masculine women." All real evolution of the individual tends to obliterate sex distinctions. For example, one may be "manly" in the strongest and best sense, yet repress and control the lower elements of sex and at the same time cultivate those finer elements of his nature—gentleness and love—which are naturally stronger in woman. He becomes in no sense "unsexed," but in the highest sense more manly, more humane, and hence more intuitive and spiritual. When such a Soul is to reïncarnate it will do so in the body, time, place, and circumstance *that it needs* for further experience and progress, and with supreme indifference whether the body be "male" or "female," as it is merely a "way-side Inn."

QUESTION 30.

In what respect does a Master differ from an Adept, an Initiate, or a Mahâtmâ? These terms seem to be used rather loosely and as if interchangeable; strictly speaking, how would they rank, and what qualifications and powers are the adjunct of one who has earned the name Master?

W. Q. Judge.—It is not possible to clear up these difficulties of language. They are all—except *Mâhatmâ*—interchangeable. That term of course stands alone, but when it is put into English as "Great Soul," then those two words begin the confusion again, because *Soul* is not definite. A Master is an Adept and a Adept is a Master, and both are Initiates. For my part I see no way of settling the question, and personally I do not want it settled yet; I want no strict limitations in terms until the English language has become scientific.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

FOR THE USE OF BRANCHES.

In articles and addresses never use Sanskrit or foreign terms without also giving the English meaning; use English terms preferably.

DEVACHAN.

A state—not a place. The heaven of the lower self united to its spiritual half after death. Corresponds with the Christian idea of Heaven. Spiritualistic conception of the "Summerland" an erroneous idea. Length of its duration variable. Normal length for men of this humanity, from 1000 to 1500 years. Soul only enters it after throwing off the connection with the earth-life. A state in which the memory of the spiritual side of the previous lives is awakened. Earth-bound souls, *i.e.*, those who die with powerful ambitions and desires, debarred from entrance thereinto. Communication with those on earth possible through the medium of the higher Manas.

REFERENCES.

Key to Theosophy, sec. ix; *Lucifer*, vol. iii, "Dialogue on the Mysteries of the After-Life," p. 407; *Ocean of Theosophy*, chap. xiii; *Path* articles, vol. v, pp. 40 and 79.

BHAGAVAD-GITA.

Part of the great Hindû poem, the *Mahâbharata*. One of the most metaphysical treatises extant. Consists of eighteen discourses, eighteen being the number of this yuga or age. Arjuna the lower ego, Krishna the higher ego. The conversation between these two signifying the thought which every man induces who is thinking about his own nature. Effort of the treatise is to show how to obtain Nirvana or Yoga—union with the spirit. First six chapters describe the nature of the individual soul, the second six describe the nature of the universal Spirit, and the third signify the condition of him whose soul is united with the Deity. Each chapter has a special meaning in connection with the growth of the soul. Students should understand that there are many interpretations according to the stage of advancement of the reader. The various names in the book refer as much to conditions of the mind as to actual persons and places. What is the meaning of action and inaction? The hostile armies meeting on the plain of the Kurus are the two collections of faculties tending to raise up and draw down the human soul.

REFERENCES.

Preface to Judge's edition *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*; article *Path*, Sept., 1895.

HYPNOTISM.

Modern exhibition of black magic or sorcery. Increasing year by year. The Theosophical philosophy opposed to it. Not understood by science; nor can it be understood without a knowledge of Occultism. Consists in the injection of auric or odic fluid of one person into the system of another, thus upsetting the vibrations of the atoms of the other's body. The name "hypnotism" a misnomer, for all subjects do not sleep. Difference between hypnotism and mes-

merism explained by article, *Lucifer*, December, 1890. Theosophists, above all, should not practice it, for it destroys the stability of the mind. Diseases cured by hypnotism liable to be transferred to the hypnotist. Hypnotism of all degrees the one thing which the world is striving to rid itself of. A dangerous practice because interfering with the soul development of both the hypnotist and the hypnotized. Theory of vibrations in connection with it. A great deal of it the result of "suggestion" and what used to be called "fascination." The student of Occultism should above all things prevent his mind being controlled by another. To give himself up to hypnotic suggestion is to throw back his possibilities of advance for many years, if not for a whole lifetime. The errors of hypnotism lie fundamentally in the interference with the free-will of the soul, and secondarily in the upsetting of the psychic currents of the body.

REFERENCES.

Lucifer, article "Hypnotism," December, 1890, p. 51; article "Black Magic in Science," June, 1890; article "The Signs of the Times," October, 1887; (see *Studies in Occultism No. 2.*)

CONCENTRATION.

Literal meaning, "with the centre," *i.e.*, balance. To hold the mind on any object without thinking of anything but it. One of the practices of occultism. Does not consist in staring at a spot on the wall or anything in particular, but in keeping the mind free from thoughts and desires that draw it away from that upon which it should be placed. Difficulty of concentration in the West, owing to thought indulgences, and want of strength of character. Concentration results from ability to keep the mind fixed upon whatever duty it has to perform. To think of results is to destroy the concentrative power. Hence duty without desire for reward is one phase of it. It differs from meditation, inasmuch as the latter consists in revolving a matter in the mind in order to understand it, whereas concentration is merely the holding of the mind on the object. Concentration however is a necessary adjunct to meditation. Vanity, egotism, individual affections and preferences, personality of all kinds, the desire for position and wealth, hate, jealousy, fear, are all destroyers of the concentrative faculty. Hence they are to be avoided by the student. Through concentration lies the power of raising the Kundalini or spiritual force. When the mind can hold itself upon its karmic duties without any tendency to flee therefrom to other objects, then it will discover how to unite itself with the spirit.

REFERENCES.

Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms; Bhagavad-Gîtâ;* article *Path*, July, 1888, and February, 1890.

THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

Dr. Allan Griffiths, Coast Lecturer, left San Francisco August 1st for a trip through Washington and Oregon.

Beacon Theosophical Society is the name of a new Society to be organized in Boston. Full particulars will appear next month.

AURORA BRANCH in Oakland reports their seating capacity fully utilized at Sunday lectures. The Branch meeting draws an attendance of twenty.

IN RUSSIA matters Theosophical seem to be coming more to the fore; three applications for membership and Theosophical information have come from different parts of that country in the last few weeks.

ABBOTT CLARK has been lecturing and giving parlor talks in southern California the past two months, devoting his time chiefly to San Diego, but has made a general tour of the centres in the southern part of the state.

CENTRO TEOSÓFICO de VENEZUELA was chartered August 4th. Application was made some time since for this charter, but changes in the American organization necessitated a re-voting on the question of affiliation. The Centro Teosófico de Venezuela has unanimously decided to unite with us.

AUSTRALIAN THEOSOPHISTS have organized and asked for a charter as a Section of the Theosophical Society in America. It has not yet been fully decided as to how this will be arranged. The probability is that a Theosophical Society in Australia will be properly constituted, as in Europe. The Sydney members are almost unanimous in upholding this constitution.

SIRIUS BRANCH of the T.S.A. is the name of a new Branch to be chartered at North Yamhill, Oregon. This is partly the work of members of the Prometheus T.S., who are very closely in sympathy with the new Society. Dr. E. O. Svenson was elected President and Miss Barbara Hanswirth Secretary. The new Branch has already had several lectures by Brother Scotford of Prometheus T.S. and Brother J. S. David, with large audiences. The Sirius Branch is the eleventh Branch chartered since the formation of the T.S.A.

SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH and Golden Gate Lodge each have an average attendance of about thirty at their meetings. The latter Branch notes an addition of five members during the month. The Sunday evening meetings in Red Men's Hall, San Francisco, have a greatly increased attendance, the audiences now running from 120 to 140, as compared with about seventy a month ago. Lectures have been delivered as follows: July 21st, *Gods, Men and Devils*, Dr. J. A. Anderson; July 28th, *Thoughts in Life, Sleep and Death*, Dr. Allen Griffiths; August 4th, *Individuality and Unity*, R. H. Gay; August 11th, *The Man that Reincarnates*, Mrs. M. M. Thirds.

THE ARYAN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is about to begin work for the Fall and Winter. The increase in attendance at the meetings recently and the further great increase which is anticipated in the coming months has made the Trustees think it wise to consider plans for pushing forward the work in every direction. It has therefore been decided to recommence the methods of admitting visitors by ticket, and of associateship. The Tuesday and Sunday evening meetings from henceforth will be more efficiently conducted so far as the reception of visitors is concerned. Mr. H. S. Budd has been appointed doorkeeper and he has a small staff of assistants. It is further proposed to have monthly reunions and every member is invited and asked to take part in them. Cards of admission to the meetings can be obtained from every member of the Branch.

LOYALTY T.S. has been busy in proposing and carrying out schemes for the increase of its membership and the purchase of books and a library to

carry on its work. Under the able supervision of Mrs. Florence Pratt, the originator of many ideas in this connection, the Loyalty members individually obtained a little money which they presented to the Society for the formation of a library. Each lady member was required to hand to the Treasurer some money which she herself had earned apart from her ordinary work, and then to write a short description of her experiences. These descriptions have been bound together and form a very delightful book, capitally illustrated by Col. Steward. This book, again, was for sale to the highest bidder on the night of the reception. It is called "Stray Leaves from Loyalty Library." It sold for $11.50, Mrs. Bertie Du Bois Peters being the purchaser. Altogether the Loyalty Branch succeeded in getting $70.00 and about 75 books donated, including sets of *Isis Unveiled* and the *Secret Doctrine.* This is all the outcome of one month's labor by a few ladies aided by a few gentlemen of the Branch, and goes to show what spirit and determination for the good of the cause will accomplish.

THE RESIGNATION OF MRS. V. S. BEANE.

It is with feelings of sincere regret that Pacific Coast Theosophists learn of Mrs. V. S. Beane's resignation from the office of Secretary of the Pacific Coast Committee for T.S. Work, which she has so long held and the duties of which she has so ably discharged. These feelings are not confined to the Pacific Coast alone, but are shared by very many members of the whole Society who have received evidence of her untiring zeal and self-sacrificing efforts for the success of the T.S.

Mrs. Beane's retirement is caused solely by temporary ill-health, and she deeply regrets the necessity of her resignation for she declares that her heart is still in the work. She also expresses the hope that she may soon again resume active work, which is also the sincere hope of all who know of her devotion to the Theosophical movement, and her loyalty to her fellow-workers in a common cause. ALLEN GRIFFITHS.

SEATTLE, *Aug. 12, 1895.*

STAMP COLLECTION FOR THE T.S.

Members from all parts of the world have responded to the suggestion made in the March number of the *Path* about making a Stamp Collection, and the collection has grown very rapidly—a large number of good stamps have been sent from England, Ceylon (unused), New South Wales, New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands (unused), Sweden, and U.S.A.

The two great needs at present are—*(a)* books to keep them in, which will cost $12.00; and *(b)* complete unused sets of the stamps in *present* use in the different countries. We have not as yet a set of the unused U.S.A. stamps, and there have been two new sets issued within the past six months.

Among the stamps sent in is a set of U.S.A. newspaper stamps, from the $1.00 value to the $60.00 value.

One member in England sent a number of old English and Victorian stamps, and an odd one in the shape of a one shilling stamp on a card to be used to send a telegram—this is an English one. More has to be found out about it as regards its value, as it is not catalogued.

Members are asked to look up old letters, to ask their relatives and friends to allow them to look through boxes and in garrets for old letters. Every day

we read in the Stamp Journals (of which there are over ten in the U.S.A. alone) of old and valuable stamps being found in this way.

Stamped envelopes (that is, those envelopes that have the stamp stamped on) should not be cut. And if the stamp that is placed on the envelope is over thirty years old, it had better be left on, and the whole envelope sent in.

Mexico is rich in Revenue stamps, but as yet we have not received any.

Members should write to their friends in foreign countries for used and unused stamps.

Specific directions will be furnished to those who desire them.

Though we have done well in the past six months, we can do more in the next six, if every member in every land will help.

T. P. HYATT.

147 Hancock street, BROOKLYN, N. Y., U. S. A. *Collector.*

SUPPORT OF THE T.S.A.

MORE ABOUT THE "FUND."

Since the appearance of the July FORUM I have had several inquiries as to the workings of the plan, and as I have not time to write each a personal letter, I take this method of replying to all.

Remittances are made direct to me. I return my receipt as Trustee. Remittances are not to be sent to the President or to Headquarters. I remit to Headquarters monthly, or as often as there is a sufficient amount on hand to make it advisable. All money is deposited in bank subject to my order as Trustee. Also, subject to the order of the President W. Q. Judge.

Pledges are welcome for any amount from ten cents per month upward. I have several as high as ten dollars per month, and dozens at ten cents per month. Remittances may be made monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly as pledgers desire, but should be made in advance. Then you are sure it is paid up to date at all times.

Pledges are not made to me, but to your own self. No one can release you from a pledge but your own self. If you pledge an amount and find you cannot pay it—that is, really *cannot*, not that it becomes inconvenient to pay it—then you are of course absolved, as no one is expected to keep the weeds out of a larger plot of ground than he can work over.

I am glad to acknowledge the receipt of four new pledges since the issue of the July FORUM, and also to state that several in arrears have found it possible to pay up. The Fund is bound to grow if each of us does all that he can.

G. E. HARTER.

51 Huffman Avenue, DAYTON, OHIO, *August 6, 1895.* *Trustee.*

AUGUST 15TH. Received from George E. Harter the sum of one hundred dollars ($100.00), making a total of $345.00 received since January 16th.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.
President.

PLAYING AT OCCULTISM.

Some so-called students of Theosophy are easily influenced by external forms. A black face or a turban and a long-sounding Hindû name seem to

be of greater interest to them than the silent travelling along the road of occultism and theosophic work. This has been manifested much around this country since the date of the World's Fair. Ordinary Hindûs who came to that Exposition for the purpose of filling some necessary and secular position thereat, have since, by the imagination of a few excitable people, been run up into the dignity and the rank of Mahâtmâs and real spiritual Gûrûs. Nor has the subtile Hindû failed to take advantage of this veneration of him; stimulated by these attentions, the most ordinary men have worked the public fancy into thinking them at the least Rishis. This is not good for the development of a spiritual movement, and Theosophists should not be carried away by such childishness. As a matter of principle also the following of personalities and the running after forms and ceremonies is bad and is untheosophical.

The latest development of this kind is "Swami" Vivekananda's "initiations." Apart from some of this gentleman's ethical teachings (about which there is nothing occult, for he is not an occultist) there is a manifest absurdity in his causing two or three of his American followers to change their names and become "Swamis" also. We are further to expect them to wear turbans. This is truly *playing at occultism.* Moreover, if these members were working for the spread of Truth they would not run down the Theosophical Society, as many of them do; to what purpose no one can tell, unless they consider this one way of getting a hearing. One of these was a former member of the T.S.—Mr. Leon Landsberg—who has become "Swami Kripananda" and is now trying to missionize the country on these methods. Theosophists should be warned against such as this. Mr. Landsberg, in becoming "initiated" and in his new field has apparently forgotten that he has broken many real occult pledges and has put himself into a new school of "occultism" against all rules. But we leave Karma to deal with him; it is not for us to say anything. "He who breaks his promises in one house will do so in another," say the Chinese, the tendency to blow hot and cold becoming a habit of the nature. Yet the FORUM has to warn members against being misled by these pretences. While we are always desirous and ready to aid everyone, Theosophist or not, who is trying to push forward a spiritual movement among men in this age of darkness, little patience can be had for persons who think that such puerilities as turbans and Hindû names can get them or others into Moksha, or even Heaven.

NOTICES.

May FORUM is now out of print. As several requests have been made for copies of it, any member having a copy or copies on hand which he does not desire to keep will kindly send them to Headquarters. They can then be used to supply those who wish to complete their sets. In mailing they should be folded flat.

Those Members-at-Large who have not sent in their diplomas for endorsement as valid under the Constitution of the T.S.A. are requested to send them in as soon as possible so that all diplomas may be endorsed.